

# Oil By Rail Fact Sheet July 2014

**Overview:** The dangers of moving bakken crude by rail are at the forefront of current public debate energy transportation. The number of explosive derailments involving bakken crude has skyrocketed over the past year. With more than 70 percent of bakken crude being moved via rail, the potential dangers of exploding oil trains is now a national issue that impacts the health, safety, and livelihoods of Americans in almost every state. People that witnessed the Casselton derailment will attest to the explosive nature of bakken crude, and the people of Quebec who lost 47 people due to a group of bakken oil trains that derailed and vaporized downtown Lac-Megantic. In addition grain shipments for farmers in N.D. have been delaye due to large amount of oil cars on the railroads. A study produced by NDSU estimates that N.D. farmers have lost nearly 70 million dollars thus far due to delays in grain shipments.



DRC members gather in Grand Forks to raise awareness about the dangers of oil by rail. July 2014

**Solution-Ban DOT-111 Rail Cars:** DOT-111 rail cars have been found by the National Transportation Safety Board to be unsafe since 2012 due to the ease with which they can be punctured in the case of a derailment. As a result, DOT-111 cars need to be banned or very quickly phased off of the rails. DOT-111 cars were responsible for both Casselton and Lac Megantic rail incidents.



DOT-111 rail cars. Photo credit: priceoil.org



Lac-Megantic disaster. Photo credit CTV news

## **Solution-Stabilize**

**Bakken Crude:** Requiring oil companies to strip NGLs (natural gas liquids) prior to shipping it on rail or via pipelines would significantly reduce the explosiveness of bakken oil. State's like Texas with unconventional oil plays like N.D. have for years practiced stabilizing their oil to avoid the possible dangers associated with shipping explosive crude. This requires

**Solution- Slow Down Cars in Cities:** Slowing down oil trains as they reach cities is one way to mitigate possible derailment events. Slowing cars to 25-30mph in major cities would reduce much of the risk of oil trains moving through cities.

**Solution- Reduce Congestion for Grain:** Moving grain should be a priority in North Dakota. As a result we need to urge railroad companies to give more priority to shipments of grain moving forward, so N.D. farmers are no longer burden by shipping delays.